



For Immediate Release
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Rep. Pitts opposes repeal of President's embryo stem cell research funding policy

Washington-Congressmen Joe Pitts (R, PA-16) today issued the following statement in response to calls to repeal President Bush's policy on federal funding for embryo stem cell research.

"I am strongly in favor of stem cell research. Adult and cord blood stem cell research has made progress towards saving lives. But embryonic stem cell research has yielded no such progress. We should focus our energy on research that yields results, not experiments that waste money and discard human life. Expanding investment in failed embryo research is not the way to go," said Congressman Pitts.

Recent breakthroughs in non-embryonic research:

- New research conducted by scientists in the U.S. and Argentina confirms previous studies showing that adult stem cells are effective in repairing heart damage. Specifically, an injection of adult stem cells into the damaged heart tissue of people with significant heart problems significantly improves their heart function.
- Duke University Medical Center researchers have demonstrated that cells taken from human fat tissue are truly stem cells.
- Researchers from the Hanson Institute at South Australia's Royal Adelaide Hospital have identified baby teeth as a valuable source of stem cells and much easier to obtain than controversial embryonic stem cells.
- Scientists from Norway have succeeded in coaxing one type of adult cell to start behaving like a completely different type of adult cell. The scientists have made human skin cells in a test tube behave as if they were immune system cells, by bathing the skin cells in extracts of immune cells.
- Researchers at the University of Minnesota have proved the ability of an adult bone marrow stem cell to proliferate extensively in culture and form virtually any tissue type – properties once claimed exclusively for embryonic stem cells.
- Researchers at The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center have turned muscle progenitor cells -- stem cells that are "committed" to becoming muscle tissue – into cells that look and act like neurons (nerve cells).

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